

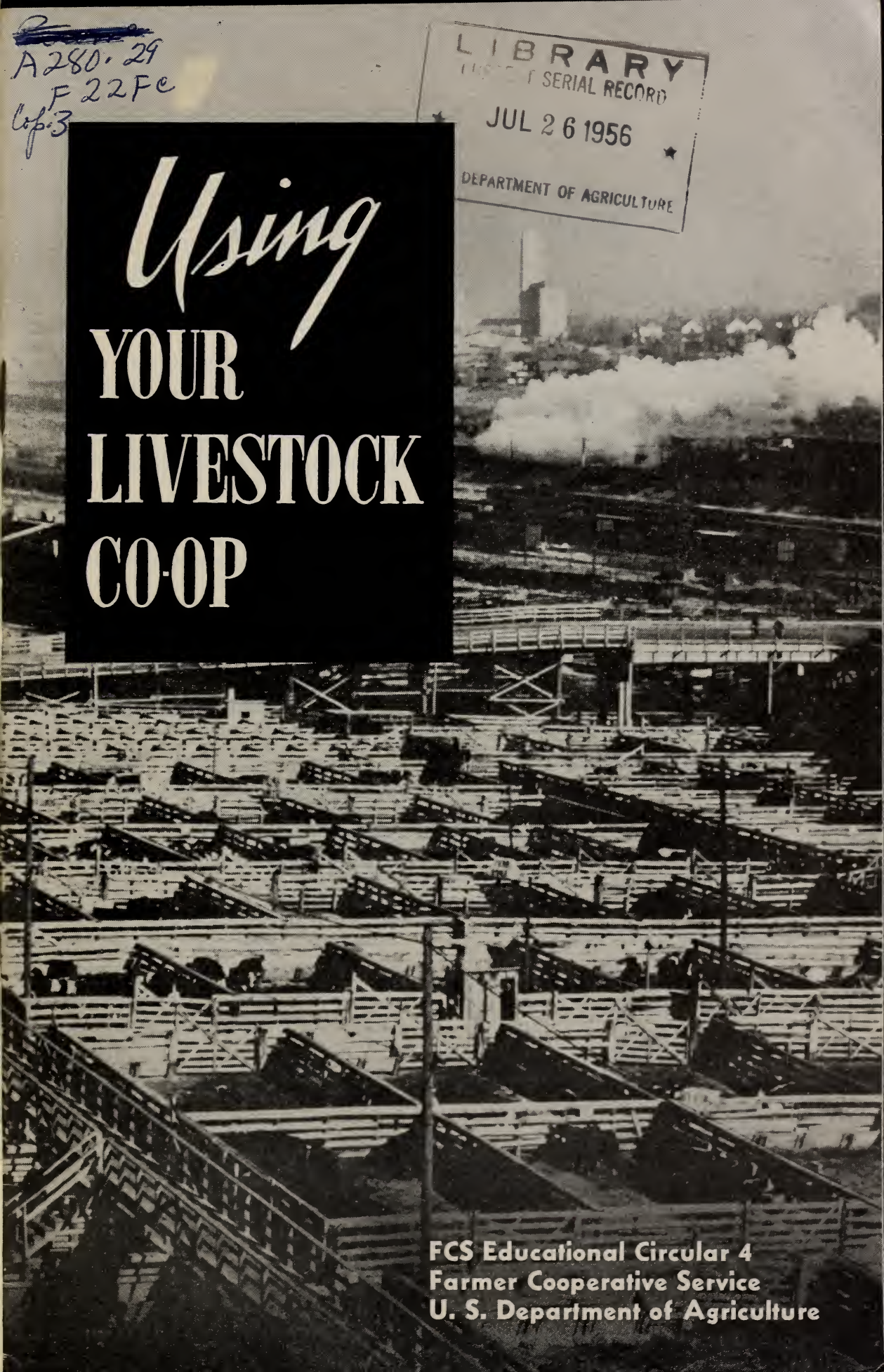
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Using
**YOUR
LIVESTOCK
CO-OP**



**FCS Educational Circular 4
Farmer Cooperative Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture**

THE Farmer Cooperative Service conducts research studies and service activities of assistance to farmers in connection with cooperatives engaged in marketing farm products, purchasing farm supplies, and supplying business services. The work of the Service relates to problems of management, organization, policies, financing, merchandising, quality, costs, efficiency, and membership.

The Service publishes the results of the studies; confers and advises with officials of farmers' cooperatives; and works with educational agencies, cooperatives, and others in the dissemination of information relating to cooperative principles and practices.

Joseph G. Knapp
Administrator
Farmer Cooperative Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture

FCS Educational Circular 4
(Formerly FCA Circular E-7)
Slightly Revised December 1954

Using Your Livestock Co-op

By C. G. Randell

Livestock and Wool Branch Marketing Division

ALIVESTOCK cooperative is a grower-owned and controlled organization which serves livestock producers and feeders in handling, procuring, and marketing livestock.

At present over a million farmers and ranchmen are members of livestock cooperatives. Producers began to organize local and terminal livestock cooperatives about 1880 but it was not until the early 1920's that terminal cooperatives became firmly established on a number of the livestock markets of the country.

During the period 1920 to 1930 members marketed their livestock largely through local shipping associations, which in turn consigned to terminal markets. Producers also consigned their livestock direct to the terminal marketing associations.

In the late 20's and early 30's marketing of livestock began to be decentralized. Livestock auctions sprang up at country points. Packers bought more livestock direct at their plants or buying points. A number of livestock cooperatives also found it wise to decentralize their operations and build or acquire facilities at country

points to maintain or increase their volume of business.

Operating facilities at both terminal markets and country points multiplied marketing problems of cooperatives. But decentralization gave producers a wide choice of outlets and services, and brought the markets closer to their farms.

Producers now have membership in 38 terminal and regional marketing associations which operate on 29 of the 64 large livestock markets in the United States. Sixteen of these cooperatives operate 93 branches at terminal and country markets, making a total of 122 markets served.

These livestock cooperatives have been built by thousands of farmers and ranchers working together. But not only livestock producers have built cooperative service organizations to handle and market their products. Farmers in other fields such as fruits and vegetables, grain, and dairy have likewise joined together and formed marketing associations to serve their needs.

Livestock cooperatives then are only one of the many kinds of cooperatives which serve about 3 million producers in many different commodity fields.

Types of Cooperatives

THE two general types of livestock cooperatives now operating in this country are—(1) local trucking or shipping associations and (2) regional and terminal cooperatives. In many cases both types of cooperatives work together in a coordinated program with each supplementing the activities of the other.

The local associations are primarily service organizations. They assemble livestock and arrange for its transportation from farm to market. They do little if any selling of livestock, yet are an important link between the producer and his livestock market, particularly for the smaller producer.

Most of the local livestock cooperatives transport stock exclusively by truck and operate from 50 to several hundred miles from terminal markets.

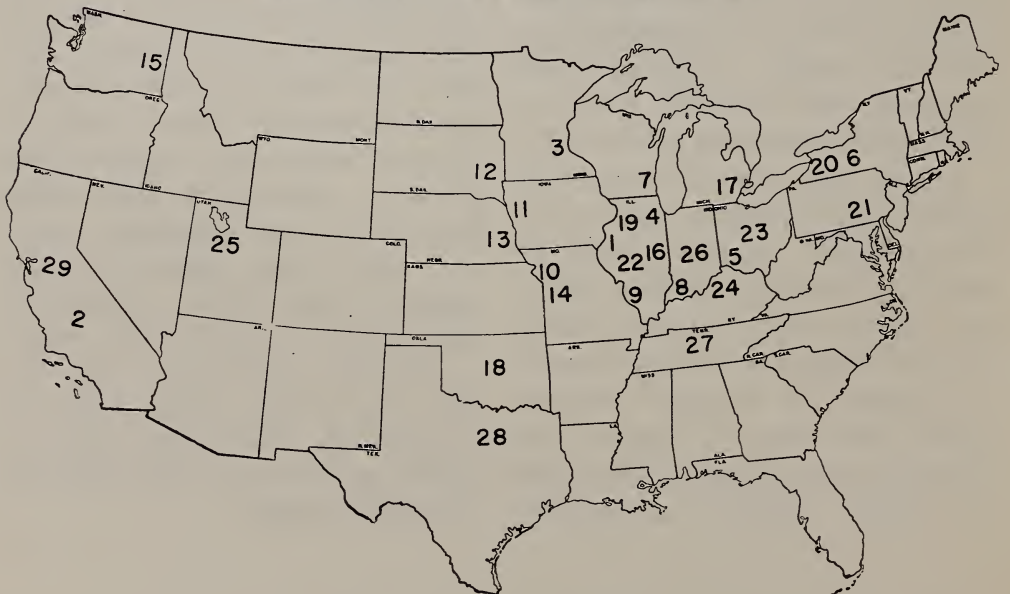
They have their own trucks or contract with livestock truckers to assemble and haul livestock for their members. Some local associations use small trucks to assemble livestock from several farms at one central point where the stock is loaded into a large trailer and taken to market.

The identity of each farmer's livestock is maintained by marking with chalk or shears. Returns from selling the livestock, less trucking and other expenses including yardage, feed, insurance and commissions, go directly to the farmer from the sales agency.

The map on this page shows where regional and terminal livestock cooperatives operate. At some points more than one cooperative is in operation.

The regional and terminal cooperatives are primarily selling organizations and serve much more ex-

Figure 1.—Location of regional and terminal cooperative livestock marketing associations in the United States, 1954.



**Location of regional and terminal cooperative livestock marketing associations
in the United States—1954**

Association	Address	Number branches operated
1. Bushnell Producers Commission Co.....	Bushnell, Ill.....	-----
2. California Farm Bureau Marketing Association.	Visalia, Calif.....	2
3. Central Livestock Association, Inc.....	South St. Paul, Minn....	¹ 2
Farmers Union Marketing Association....	-----do-----	1
Interstate Livestock Co-op. Association....	-----do-----	-----
4. Chicago Producers Commission Association.	Chicago, Ill.....	-----
Farmers Union Livestock Commission Co....	-----do-----	-----
5. Cincinnati Livestock Producers Association.	Cincinnati, Ohio.....	5
6. Empire Livestock Marketing Co-op., Inc....	Ithaca, N. Y.....	8
7. Equity Co-op. Livestock Sales Association...	Milwaukee, Wis.....	11
8. Evansville Producers Commission Association.	Evansville, Ind.....	-----
9. Farmers Livestock Commission Co.....	East St. Louis, Ill.....	1
Producers Livestock Marketing Association.	-----do-----	1
10. Farmers Union Livestock Commission....	South St. Joseph, Mo....	-----
Producers Livestock Marketing Association.	-----do-----	-----
11. Farmers Union Livestock Commission....	Sioux City, Iowa.....	-----
Producers Commission Association.....	-----do-----	-----
Progressive Farmers Cooperative Association.	-----do-----	-----
12. Farmers Union Livestock Commission....	Sioux Falls, S. Dak.....	-----
13. Farmers Union Livestock Commission....	Omaha, Nebr.....	-----
Producers Livestock Marketing Association.	-----do-----	-----
14. Farmers Union Livestock Cooperative....	Kansas City, Mo.....	2
Producers & Texas Livestock Marketing Association.	-----do-----	-----
15. Grange Interstate Livestock Association...	Spokane, Wash.....	-----
16. Illinois Livestock Marketing Association...	Decatur, Ill.....	19
17. Michigan Livestock Exchange.....	Detroit, Mich.....	2
18. Oklahoma Livestock Marketing Association.	Oklahoma City, Okla....	-----
19. Peoria Producers Commission Association...	Peoria, Ill.....	-----
20. Producers Cooperative Commission Association.	Buffalo, N. Y.....	-----
21. Producers' Livestock Co-operative.....	Lancaster, Pa.....	-----
22. Producers Livestock Commission Co.....	Springfield, Ill.....	-----
23. Producers Livestock Cooperative Association.	Columbus, Ohio.....	19
24. Producers Livestock Marketing Association.	Louisville, Ky.....	-----
25. Producers Livestock Marketing Association.	Salt Lake City, Utah....	7
26. Producers Marketing Association.....	Indianapolis, Ind.....	10
27. Tennessee Producers Livestock Marketing Association.	Nashville, Tenn.....	-----
28. Texas Livestock Marketing Association...	Fort Worth, Tex.....	1
29. Valley Livestock Marketing Association...	Stockton, Calif.....	2

¹ Central Livestock Association, Billings, Mont., affiliate of Central Livestock Association, Inc., South St. Paul, Minn.

tensive areas than local associations. A regional cooperative may operate at terminal markets and country points, or at both. It may operate in one State or several. It may conduct both terminal sales agencies and local markets, including auctions.

A number of cooperatives operate only on terminal markets. They handle and sell livestock from a wide area in several States. These are known as terminal sales agencies. An example of this type is the Producers Livestock Marketing Association, Omaha, Nebr. Such cooperatives receive livestock on consignment. They yard, feed, water, sort, and sell the stock and then deliver it to scales to be weighed. The cooperative issues an account of sale and makes payment for the stock directly to the grower. Agencies of this type also purchase stockers and feeders and perform other services.

An example of the type of cooperative that operates at both terminal and country points is the Producers Livestock Cooperative Association, Columbus, Ohio. It operates 3 terminal agencies at Columbus, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh, plus 17 area markets and 15 submarkets including auctions and concentration yards. Most of its hog business is on the basis of direct sales to packers.

Another type of regional association is the Empire Livestock Marketing Cooperative, Inc., Ithaca, N. Y. It owns and operates 8 livestock auctions located in the principal producing areas of that State. It sells livestock at each of the auction points and makes returns to the producers from the auctions. But it maintains all general accounting and financial records at the central office in Ithaca.

Services of Livestock Cooperatives

A LIVESTOCK producer has many jobs to do in conducting his business.

If the farmer is a feeder, he takes an inventory of his grain and roughage and decides how many and what kinds of livestock he will feed. He decides when and where the stocker and feeder animals will be purchased and about what he should pay. He arranges to finance the feeding operation. Once he has bought the livestock, the most efficient feeding rations and the best feeding practices are problems that must be considered. Finally, he must decide when the stock is ready for

market and then choose the method and place of selling it.

He can do some of these jobs very well himself. For others he may need the services of a cooperative or another selling agency. The producer himself must decide which services he will undertake and which ones he will delegate.

Purchasing Stockers and Feeders

Purchasing stocker and feeder animals is one of the important services of livestock cooperatives.

With their organizations and connections over the country cooperatives usually are in a position

to fill orders for stockers or feeders on a terminal market, direct from the range, or at an auction. In purchasing cattle, for example, if the farmer prefers stock direct from the range the buyer for the co-operative is familiar with the brands. He knows the ranchers as well as their cattle. He knows where purebred bulls have been used to improve the offspring and which cattle will give a good account of themselves in the feed lot. He knows how the stock is usually handled from the range to the loading point—an important factor in determining shrinkage.

Many well-staffed cooperatives are equipped to help farmers get good stockers and feeders. Their buyers know the ropes. They know

livestock values. They know livestock grades. And they can help farmers avoid many of the pitfalls in producing stocker and feeder animals.

Many farmers have learned that it is wise to work out their feeding program and order their stockers and feeders from their cooperative well in advance of the time they will need the stock. This gives the cooperative an opportunity to buy the livestock when receipts, selection and prices are favorable. In this way it can take advantage of price breaks and, by picking up a few head at each of several points, it can put together a load at a lower price than if they were buying a straight load of graded animals. There is an old saying in the live-



The farm boys today are the stockmen of tomorrow. Here is an interested group looking over fed cattle in co-op pens.

stock business that stockers and feeders "well bought are half sold." Cooperatives strive to buy the quality of stock the feeder wants at a fair price.

Financing

Credit is the lifeblood of the livestock business. Very few producers are in position to finance the purchase of a breeding herd or several cars of stocker and feeder animals without using credit.

Producers have many sources of livestock credit. These include cooperative credit corporations controlled by cooperative livestock marketing associations, production credit associations, other credit corporations, and commercial banks.

There are nine cooperative livestock credit corporations affiliated with marketing associations. Most of these were established in the early 30's when banks were calling loans and when credit from other agencies was practically nonexistent.

The organization of production credit associations after 1933 extended this type of service throughout the country. About 500 of these associations now make many different types of loans, including livestock.

Field Service

Fieldmen bring the service of the cooperatives to the local community, the farm and the feed lot.

Most regional livestock cooperatives have these field specialists—men who give full time to contacts with producer-members. Salesmen, stocker and feeder buyers, or other employees of the association often do field work.

The major job of fieldmen is to assist farmers with their marketing and production problems. Fieldmen from the livestock cooperatives work with county agricultural agents, university marketing extension and animal husbandry specialists, and teachers of vocational agriculture. Fieldmen working with these groups arrange feed lot tours where farmers see cattle of various degrees of finish and compare notes with their neighbors on feeding methods and results. The fieldmen explain the rations fed to the stock and comment on the quality and conformation of the animals and how they progress under the various systems employed in handling and feeding.

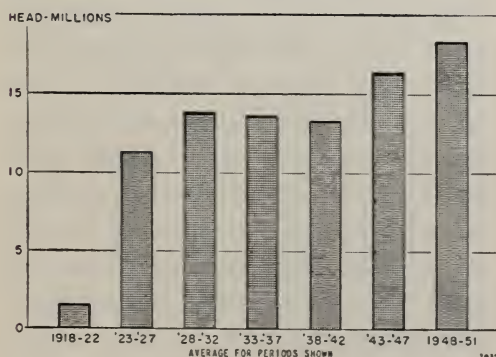
Fieldmen also arrange livestock grading demonstrations. Farmers are brought together at a farm or local stockyards where they observe the sorting of cattle, calves, hogs, and lambs into grades to fit market demands. After a demonstration farmers are given an opportunity to grade animals themselves in order to test the knowledge they have just gained. Fieldmen work with educational agencies in scheduling outlook meetings where livestock supply and demand and prospective price trends are discussed with groups of farmers. They also consider the numbers of livestock on feed or pasture and the months when stockmen are planning to market these animals. Fieldmen also assist farmers with their transportation problems. They help arrange for supplying trucks in various communities and make arrangements to have railroads improve facilities at shipping points.

Market Information

Cooperatives, through their market news information services, help producers keep abreast of the trends in supplies of stock, market demand, and prices. A producer has too much at stake to remain in the dark on these marketing factors. To be successful he must have the most dependable and accurate information to guide him in his livestock marketing and production program. Usually by radio broadcasts and news letters cooperatives supply producers with daily and weekly market information giving pertinent facts, such as receipts and prices for grades, weights, and types of stock, and the buying attitudes of packers.

Cooperatives also distribute reports on business conditions affecting present and prospective prices of livestock to farmers. Other channels of information used are livestock and farm magazines, market papers, and county and local papers for whom articles are prepared. When the situation warrants long distance calls are made to the producer giving him up-to-the-minute market information.

Figure 2.—Volume of livestock handled by regional and terminal cooperative marketing agencies, 1918–51.



Cooperatives must provide market information regularly and they must have a definite follow-up system to supply up-to-date information to the producer who has livestock that is being finished for market. The proper timing of sales of livestock may mean the difference between profit and loss on any given feeding operation.

Selling Livestock

Selling livestock is a highly specialized business which requires years of training and experience before the salesmen can match wits and bargaining ability with buyers. Most of the buyers with whom salesmen trade have spent many years in the business and are masters of the technique of purchasing.

In order to represent producers adequately in handling and selling their livestock a cooperative salesman should know receipts, daily and hourly prices, and price trends. He should be able to estimate carcass yields and the value of cuts they will produce. He also should follow the dressed meat trade to check market trends.

With this knowledge and trading ability he is equipped to obtain the best possible price for livestock. It is his responsibility to secure bids from all buyers he can interest. In addition a good salesman will not be stampeded by adverse market conditions.

Some fundamental principles in selling livestock should be kept constantly in mind. No market agency receiving livestock on consignment should speculate in livestock on its own account. When farmers consign livestock to market



The co-op stockpens are a good meeting place for the western cattle producer and the Corn Belt feeder.

and pay a commission for its sale, the sales agency should represent them and no one else.

As a matter of policy, cooperatives endeavor to treat all producers alike—large and small. This policy safeguards the interests of the small producer and assures him that his interest will not be sacrificed for the benefit of some large producer whose business volume may overshadow his own.

Livestock Improvement

Many cooperatives have pioneered in livestock improvement programs. They have brought purebred rams to many communities to stimulate the production of higher grade market lambs. Purebred and high-grade ewes, cows, and heifers have also been introduced to improve quality.

Cooperatives have graded lambs, calves, and hogs and developed plans under which they sell these animals on the basis of grades so

that farmers can be rewarded for producing high-quality stock. Interest in the production of choice fat cattle is stimulated by the co-operatives sponsoring feeder calf sales and shows. Cooperatives also work with Future Farmer groups and 4-H boys' and girls' clubs to encourage these young people to adopt better feeding and production methods by giving prizes for their accomplishments.

Other Services

In the field of transportation several regional cooperatives have assisted in organizing livestock trucking associations in areas where they were needed, and in some instances the regionals have financed the purchase of trucks. These regional cooperatives also have helped to improve shipping facilities at country points by providing new scales, loading chutes, and more livestock pens. Some of them have taken on the job of auditing freight bills, and collecting freight overcharges and claims for their members.

Through research, cooperatives provide farmers and ranchmen with information concerning the long-term outlook for livestock supplies, costs, and selling prices. Also the cooperatives help bring to producers the results of research conducted by State and Federal agencies. This service, like the market news information services, gives stockmen a basis for making decisions on when to buy and sell livestock and tends to take away some of the guesswork from their production and marketing programs.

Finding pastures for cattle, supervising pasture operations, and marketing cattle from such pastures is another service provided by some cooperatives.

Cooperatives have worked with producers' agencies, farm organizations, and other groups in initiating and securing the enactment of legislation to improve sanitation, weighing, and handling practices at many markets.

Cooperatives have led the way in improving old services and creating new ones. They have attracted buying competition to cooperative livestock markets by encouraging

new buyers to purchase stock, thus making a broader and more active market. Where markets have been unduly depressed, particularly on fat or butcher stock, cooperatives many times have bought livestock and moved it to other markets in an effort to stabilize prices.

Several regional cooperatives have decentralized their operations by establishing stockyards and other facilities in the producing areas. While markets are thus brought conveniently close to producers, sales at these markets are handled and coordinated by the central agency.

The Farmer's Choice

STOCKMEN have a number of choices in determining where they will market their livestock—at the farm or ranch, local market, auction, concentration yard, terminal market, or direct to packers. At most of these alternative outlets the producer can have the services of a cooperative if he chooses.

It is up to the individual producer to decide whether he wants to work together with his fellow farmers and stockmen in cooperatives. Long-time cooperative patrons are convinced of the value and soundness of the cooperative principle. They feel that without the competitive, pacemaking influence of such associations, constantly working in the farmers' interests, producers could find themselves distinctly handicapped in their marketing efforts.

Becoming a Member

Joining a livestock cooperative is quite simple. Most cooperatives

make no charge for membership. Others charge a nominal membership fee, perhaps \$1. A few capital stock cooperatives require the purchase of a share of stock to become a member. Livestock cooperatives have no contracts requiring delivery to the cooperative of all livestock marketed by the member.

You as a producer join a livestock cooperative to obtain services such as buying stocker and feeder animals for you or selling your livestock. Under the cooperative system of doing business you get these services at cost. Any savings the cooperative makes over and above the cost of doing business will be paid to you in refunds, or the savings will be added to your account on the books of the cooperative and used to help finance it.

However, cash savings on services rendered are small in livestock marketing, compared with those of most other business enterprises, be-



The great bulk of livestock consigned by farmer to cooperatives is transported by truck.

cause the commissions paid for the services in the first place are small. Therefore, you, as a producer, should be more interested in the quality of the "service" you receive than in cash refunds.

Joining a cooperative, like joining any organization, however, should carry with it certain responsibilities which you members should assume. These responsibilities should include buying and selling livestock at your cooperative, helping finance, and helping run your association.

Using Your Cooperative

There have been many instances where farmers became dissatisfied with the marketing services available to them in their community and set about organizing a cooperative. Once marketing conditions

improved, some farmers felt no further need to use or patronize their cooperative.

Farmers should appreciate the fact that for successful operation a cooperative should have enough volume to maintain efficiency of operation. In the case of a shipping association this means enough volume to enable the association to ship regularly and in full load lots. At a terminal market it means enough volume to insure that the association is important in establishing fair prices. For volume attracts buyers. More buyers means more competition for your livestock—and usually higher prices to you.

At the various markets, it is important to have sufficient volume of livestock so animals can be sorted and graded to fill packers' orders. Many packers are willing to pay premium prices for the weight and grade of stock which meets the demand of their trade.

Furthermore, volume makes it possible for your cooperative to hire the kind of specialized salesmen essential to getting the best prices for the grades and qualities of livestock that come to market.

Aside from the sales service, a large volume of business enables the cooperative to supply other services to farmers, such as field service, transportation, market information, and assistance in livestock improvement programs.

Financing Your Cooperative

When a producer sells his livestock through a marketing agency



Co-op salesman and buyer trading on a pen of choice hogs. Hog improvement is a major project of livestock cooperatives.

he expects payment immediately. While a large percentage of livestock is sold for cash, at some markets it is customary to extend credit to livestock buyers for several days or a week. Such credit requires capital if the cooperative pays the producer in advance . . . that is, before the buyer pays the cooperative. Cooperatives which make loans also require capital to carry livestock purchased by the agency until it is sold and the loan discounted. Still other cooperatives need large amounts of capital to finance stocker and feeder operations. All these services require operating capital for varying periods of time.

Cooperatives also need capital to acquire or build facilities . . . such things as stockyards, auction build-

ings, and offices. As long as livestock cooperatives were operating only on the terminal markets, there was little need for much capital investment. Pens and other facilities were supplied by stockyards companies, therefore operating capital requirements were small because all livestock was received on a consignment basis . . . sold for the member for cash.

Decentralized marketing brought an increased need for facilities, such as stockyards and auction buildings. These centralized cooperatives found it impossible to finance all these facilities at their various local markets and still have enough capital from savings for operating purposes. Producers in many areas solved the problem by purchasing capital stock or debentures. In

other cases the local facilities are financed and owned by local groups of farmers who lease them to co-operative marketing agencies to operate.

It is well to remember that when you as a producer help to finance your co-op in any one of these ways you are investing in your own business.

Helping To Run Your Cooperative

As a member of your cooperative you will not only want to patronize it and assist in its financing but you will also want to help run it. Co-operatives are like any other business—they do not run themselves. Many a successful cooperative measures its success in proportion to the time and effort devoted to its business by members and directors.

Because of the pioneering efforts of farmers a generation ago in building these producer owned and controlled organizations, these co-operatives have stood the test of time and livestock producers today enjoy the heritage which has been handed down to them to use, preserve, and strengthen.

A good citizen goes to the polls on election day and casts his vote. Similarly a good co-op member attends the district or annual meeting of his co-op, when directors are to be chosen. There he studies the qualifications of the candidate and casts his vote for the directors he believes best able to effectively supervise the management and operation of the association as well as determine the policies guiding it.

You and your fellow members have the responsibility of seeing that the directors live up to their duties in selecting and holding capable management and an efficient working staff; that services of a high order are maintained; and that the interests of livestock producers are always first and paramount.

Directors usually do a better job if they have come up through the ranks. Some of the most active and influential directors are those who have served on either livestock improvement or advisory committees or those who have held an office in a farm organization. Such experience gives them a chance to learn the business from the ground up.

Vocational agriculture boys and 4-H Club members who are interested in learning more about co-operatives will find many young farmers in cooperatives. Numbers of these farmers have assumed positions of responsibility and are carrying on in the finest tradition of their pioneering parents who developed the organizations.

The Job Ahead

Producers have come a long way down the marketing road. Much progress and much improvement have been made but the job is not done. Nor will it ever be done

completely. Cooperatives must be wide awake to meet changing conditions. There are many problems ahead which are yet to be solved.

With few exceptions livestock cooperatives have done and are doing an excellent job for the livestock producers even though problems still remain to be solved. Their influence is manifest throughout the livestock industry. While serving the producer in the manner in which he chooses to be served, livestock cooperatives continue to strive for steady improvement in the conditions and standards under which livestock is sold.

Extending Cooperative Services

In some sections of the United States, particularly in the South and the Northeast, livestock producers have let their production get ahead of their marketing facilities. They have little or no representation at the market place.

Producers in the Midwest went through the same experience years ago. When they wished to move into the marketing field they found the best locations at the markets already taken. Therefore, it cost them a great deal of money to establish themselves.

Prices for the same grades and weights of livestock are not identical throughout the country on any given day. At times differentials of several dollars a hundredweight develop between various regions on the same day. Supply, location, transportation, and competition all play a part in establishing these price levels.

It's the job of cooperatives to help producers avoid market gluts, encourage a more even distribution of receipts between days of the week, and help safeguard and maintain price levels and stability in the industry.

Coordinating Livestock Buying and Selling

In purchasing stockers and feeders, cooperatives are coordinating their efforts more and more and pooling their buying power. These organizations offer wide market outlets to sellers and wide selection to purchasers of stockers and feeders. The meeting of these two economic forces makes for the establishment of fair prices.

In their efforts to coordinate and level out prices of hogs between different areas and different markets, some 10 cooperatives who are members of the National Livestock Producers Association have installed direct wires between their offices to transmit up-to-the-minute market information. This aids them in keeping abreast of the changing trends in the livestock market throughout the hours of the trading day.

Cooperative Personnel

As a fundamental policy, cooperatives should employ the best personnel that money can hire. There's no place where the right personnel is more important than it is in the livestock business. This is true because of the personal service nature of the business. Cooperatives should not hesitate to pay top salaries for top men. No one can run a first class business with second rate personnel—and cooperatives should never try.

Membership Education

One of the important unfinished jobs ahead is membership education. Cooperatives cannot afford to neglect this important task. The

problem of keeping every member of the cooperative informed is a continuous undertaking.

Much of the present success of your livestock cooperative depends on how well it informs and interests its present members. However, the future foundation of every livestock cooperative rests on the youth of today. Each new generation needs to have as thorough understanding of the principles and objectives of cooperatives as the founders had when the first livestock cooperatives began. They should know that livestock marketing conditions have not always been as good as they are today.

Many of these early leaders were wise and far-seeing. They were not only building a marketing structure for themselves but they were looking ahead to the future. They wanted to build organizations that would serve them and their children following in their footsteps.

Complete and Balanced Service

Cooperatives aim for complete and balanced marketing service. This means that cooperatives in most instances are prepared to: (1) purchase stocker and feeder cattle and calves, feeder pigs, feeder lambs, and stock sheep for you at prices that are fair to you as well as the farmer or ranchman who raised them; (2) provide you with a financing service if you need it; (3) advise you on supply, demand, price trends, and what month to point livestock for market; (4) inspect and appraise weights and grades of livestock on your farm or in feedlots, and tell you when it is ready for market sometimes even cutting out the stock that is ready to be sold; (5) inform you through a timely and effective market information service supplementing the Government and State services; and finally (6)



Order buyers for cooperatives fill many orders for feeder lambs direct from the range.

provide you with a sales service that assures you that your livestock will be well marketed.

There are hundreds of thousands of livestock producers over the country who are now securing these marketing services from their own cooperatives. In areas where such services are not available, producers may find it necessary to take the lead in working out a market improvement program.

To develop the type of services described takes the combined efforts of producers, farm leaders such as farm organization officials, college and extension specialists, and vocational teachers.

The job first requires recognition of a need, the creation of a desire to do something about it, and finally an action program to put it into effect.

Some Questions on Your Livestock Co-op

1. Through what channels is most of the livestock in your community marketed? How many places are there where livestock can be sold? Which of them are cooperative? What proportion of livestock is marketed cooperatively in your community?

2. Is your wife interested in the method by which the livestock is marketed? Do other members of the family take an interest?

3. Where is the nearest livestock cooperative located?

4. How long has the cooperative been operating? How many members does it have? How many patrons?

5. How is membership acquired? What plan is being followed to make members of new patrons? Is any special effort being made to inform stockmen about the co-op's services?

6. How is the cooperative financed? Is all of the capital furnished by members? If not, what other sources are used?

7. What services does the cooperative render producers in your community?

8. How is livestock transported to market—by truck or rail? What is the percentage shipped by each method? How do truck and rail freight rates compare? What are the advantages of one system over the other?

9. What is the principal source of market information used by producers? Where does it come from? How is it used?

10. On the basis of your study, what ways do you see in which producers in your locality can improve their marketing methods? What additional services might the livestock cooperative use to improve its operating methods?

Selected Publications on Livestock Marketing

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* These publications are now distributed through the Farmer Cooperative Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

You and Your Co-op Series

OTHER circulars in this series, describing the personal relationship between you and your cooperative, are available from the Farmer Cooperative Service, Washington, D. C. The series includes:

Using Your Poultry and Egg Co-op.

Using Your Co-op Elevator.

Using Your Co-op Gin.

Using Your Wool Co-op.

Using Your Purchasing Association.

Using Your Fruit and Vegetable Co-op.

Using Your Fluid Milk Co-op.

Insuring Through Your Farmers' Mutual.

Sizing Up Your Cooperative.

Forming Farmers' Cooperatives.

Financing Farmers' Cooperatives.

Managing Farmers' Cooperatives.

Merchandising by Farmers' Cooperatives.

The Story of Farmers' Cooperatives.

Farmers' Cooperatives in Our Community.

Using a Local Cooperative as Source Material for Teaching.

Motion Picture Reference

LIVESTOCK COOPERATIVES IN ACTION. (16mm., color, sound, released 1950, 15 min.) For availability information contact the Farm Credit district office serving your State or Farmer Cooperative Service as listed below.

Information Division

Farmer Cooperative Service

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Washington, D. C.